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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Radio Service
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT Thursday, June 6, 1940.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NATIONAL 4-H CLUB ENCAMPMENT." Information from the Extension Service, U.S.Department of Agriculture.

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A recent visitor to the National Capital saw something that aroused her curiosity and led her to ask several questions. I'll read you her letter:

"Down near the Tidal Basin back of the Washington Monument, men were setting up tents on wooden platforms..... A sign over an arch said: 'Fourteenth National 4-H Club Encampment', and when I asked what it was all about, the workmen seemed to know very little. Except that the boys and girls come every year and will be there this year from June.... to ....

"Now, maybe you can relieve my curiosity. I understand that the 4-H clubs are for farm boys and girls, but beyond that I don't know much about them. Why do they hold camps in Washington? How many come, and what or who determines which boys and girls shall come? Who pays the expense of such a trip? What do they do when they get there? Is it just a pleasure jaunt, or what? And, incidentally, what does '4-H' mean, anyway? How many members of these 4-H clubs are there, the country over? Are they important?"

Well, that's quite a battery of questions. Let's begin with the last ones. Yes,- 4-H clubs <u>are</u> important, for they provide opportunities for farm young people to learn to be good farmers and farm homemakers. <u>How</u> important, you can judge by the present membership. More than 1 million, 330 thousand club members were enrolled in 4-H Clubs last year. They belonged to nearly 80 thousand clubs in the 48 states, and also in Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. That is a record membership- 95,000 more than the year before.

Now about the National 4-H camp in Washington. The Extension Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which might be called the connecting link between the Federal government and the State agricultural colleges, is responsible for the plan and makes all the arrangements. The camp brings together delegates from most of the states. Usually 40 to 43 are represented, and last year Puerto Rico sent 2 delegates and is sending 3 to this years camp.

This means an opportunity for these boys and girls to meet others from all parts of the country, and to compare the agricultural practices and interests in different sections, and the different points of view each may have. The trip to Washington is a sort of final reward for distinguished achievements in club work. Delegates are chosen from among those who have been outstanding club members over a period of years, both individually, and in service to their homes and their communities.

How many delegates come? Two boys and two girls from each state. They are accompanied by their state club agent or other extension workers. To date registrations have been received from 44 states. Hence over 200 people will be occupying the tents the writer of that letter noticed under the trees near the Washington Monument. In conferences and meetings on club programs and plans, each delegation represents all the clubs in the State. There is friendly discussion among the different State groups in the various events at camp, and that's one of the ways these young people become better acquainted with each other.

Now about the question "who pays for it all." The boys and girls themselves pay their way to the National 4-H club camp, unless the trip is sponsored by some interested group or individual back home, or expenses are met out of the club treasury. They pay for their own meals, laundry, bus transportation and incidental expenses while in Washington. The Extension Service sees to it that these are kept at a minimum. It also arranges with another government department to borrow the tents, and it provides the counselors who take the delegates on educational tours to such

places as Mt. Vernon or the Beltsville Agricultural Center, outside of Washington.

For a number of events the delegates walk, since the location of the camp is central to most of the buildings where they will hold meetings or visit. That's why the preliminary directions to each girl delegate include a suggestion about wearing plain, low-heeled, comfortable shoes. The girls wear green cotton suits which they make themselves, with white hats; the boys all dress in white trousers, white jackets and white felt hats. Altogether the group looks very attractive, and is easy to keep together in such distinctive dress.

I believe I've given you a pretty good idea of what the delegates do while here. They attend meetings on club matters every morning. They become especially well acquainted with the scope and work of the Department of Agriculture, so they can carry back to the members in their own States a vivid picture of what the department tries to do for the farmer. They hear Secretary Wallace and other interesting speakers. They visit government buildings of interest, go on educational tours to places of historic interest, speak over the radio, take part in vespers services, conduct group games and camp fire meetings, and usually have some social event. So you see it's a pretty full week, much more than a "pleasure jaunt", but much enjoyed. Every boy and girl who comes, goes home filled with new ideas and fresh inspiration from the week in Washington.

I almost forgot the last question. What does 4-H mean? Of course, most people know. It signifies the wholesome development of head, heart, hands and health, and is symbolized by a four-leaf clover with an H on each leaf. All these are essential to success in club work and in life, and together express the major goal of most club members- a happy and efficient Home.